



General Assembly

***Substitute Bill No. 504***

*February Session, 2000*

***An Act Establishing A Water Planning Council.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1       Section 1. (NEW) (a) There is established a Water Planning Council  
2       to convene a task force composed of representatives of water  
3       companies, municipalities, agricultural groups, environmental groups,  
4       and other water users and to make recommendations based on the  
5       information provided by the task force, as provided in subsection (d)  
6       of this section, to the General Assembly concerning issues involving  
7       the state's water companies, water resources and state policies  
8       regarding the future of the state's drinking water supply.

9       (b) The council shall consist of the following members:

10       (1) The chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing  
11       committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
12       relating to energy and technology, or their designees;

13       (2) The chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing  
14       committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
15       relating to the environment, or their designees;

16       (3) The chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing  
17       committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
18       relating to public health, or their designees;

19 (4) The chairperson of the Public Utility Control Authority, or the  
20 chairperson's designee;

21 (5) The Commissioner of Environmental Protection, or the  
22 commissioner's designee;

23 (6) The Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, or the  
24 secretary's designee;

25 (7) The Consumer Counsel, or the Consumer Counsel's designee;

26 (8) The Commissioner of Public Health, or the commissioner's  
27 designee; and

28 (9) The Commissioner of Agriculture, or the commissioner's  
29 designee.

30 (c) All appointments to the council shall be made no later than thirty  
31 days after the effective date of this act. Any vacancy shall be filled by  
32 the appointing authority.

33 (d) The task force appointed by the council shall study issues  
34 including, but not limited to, the financial viability, market structure,  
35 reliability of customer service and managerial competence of water  
36 companies, fair and reasonable rates, protection and appropriate  
37 allocation of the state's water resources and the adequacy and quality  
38 of the state's drinking water.

39 (e) Based on the information provided to the council, the council  
40 shall, not later than January 1, 2003, report its findings and any  
41 proposed legislative changes to the appropriate joint standing  
42 committees of the General Assembly. The council shall terminate on  
43 the date that it submits its final report or January 1, 2003, whichever is  
44 earlier.

45 Sec. 2. The sum of one hundred thousand dollars is appropriated to  
46 the Joint Committee on Legislative Management, from the General  
47 Fund, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2001, for the purposes set forth

48 in subsection (d) of section 1 of this act.

49 Sec. 3. This act shall take effect from its passage.

**ET Committee Vote:** Yea 16 Nay 0 JFS C/R ENV

**ENV Committee Vote:** Yea 23 Nay 0 JFS

**PH Committee Vote:** Yea 17 Nay 0 JF